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Introduction – Towards Third Worlding

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ABSTRACT In a well-known formulation, Vijay Prashad wrote that, "The Third World was not a place. It was a project." This forum feels out ways to understand and remember the Third World project as a collective horizon of freedom enacted by ordinary people in their daily lives. Beyond the political leadership of the iconic leadership of Third World state leaders and the foundational conferences they convened, we seek to explore how the Third World was lived and imagined. We do so as an invitation to fellow teachers and students to deepen collective imagining through a twin process of learning and unlearning. Formulated as a practice of Third Worlding, this invitation is a proposal to make historical precedents familiar and make progressive visions of intersectional, anti-racist, decolonial struggle strange. It seeks out other ways of calling comrades into political practices by exploring the ways in which Third World subjects imagined and related to each other. In this introduction, we lay out what Third Worlding might offer as a tool for reorientation in the political present.

KEYWORDS Third World, interpellation, media, political imagination, solidarity

We come to this forum as scholar-researchers active in intersecting political spaces. Specifically, we are diasporic writer-organizers in the United States engaged in struggles around abolition, Palestinian liberation, migrant justice, climate justice, and political education. We have come together as editors to explore the historical project of the Third World from the practice of media research and political imagination in movement building. More specifically still, we are concerned with the durabilities of solidarities in movements today and the ways in which they imagine the building of collective power in an uneven world. As such, this forum responds to an urgency we perceive in movement-building

spaces for frameworks not only for critiquing entrenched power, but also for building the power necessary for liberation. In convening this forum, we have asked, What would a critical return to the internationalisms of the Third World project offer workers, community leaders, prisoners, climate activists in the current moment? In exploring answers to this question, we found ourselves pulled in multiple directions. We revisited debates on decolonization and decoloniality. We considered a range of internationalisms that compete for dominance in intersecting political theaters today, from liberal-progressive to radical left. We turned to a radical history of thinkers and organizers considering the legacy of the Third World and related formations (e.g., a fourth world). As we did so, we explored a range of approaches to feelings of defeat, resilience, and struggle. As a product of this exploration, the forum *Towards Third Worlding* offers possible orientations within contemporary political struggle. The point for us has been identifying tools to navigate the dialectic between knowing the past and unlearning the present in a moment pregnant with competing visions for the future.

In a well-known formulation, Vijay Prashad wrote that, "The Third World was not a place. It was a project."[1] His corrective invited readers to look past the contemporary association of "Third World" with "developing economies" or even "Global South" to its history as a twentieth-century political project with a vision to unite African, Asian, and Latin American peoples in leftist, anti-colonial struggle. The legacy of that project is largely occluded in mainstream discourse across the political spectrum—on both the left and the right. With our undergraduate students in mind, one of our intentions in framing this forum around the ideas connecting a Third World was to return readers to this history of a specific leftist, anti-colonial, internationalist political project. As teachers, we think there is much to be recovered by this look to the past and reconsidering of historical narratives.

But the point is not a nostalgic, resurrectionary turn to the past, even one positioned on the left. To be sure, radical historians intimately familiar with the legacies of the Third World project continue to explore these afterlives and have done so more comprehensively than we have room to reproduce here. We share with recent research a healthy skepticism about the political value of resurrecting Third World statist projects as the compass of revolutionary politics.[2] Our turn to the affective tissues of the Third World feels out a revolutionary internationalism less dependent on these statist visions.

At the same time, in the movement spaces we participate in, we editors are inspired by comrades honestly grappling with fatigue and burnout while being suspicious of the romantic valences often attributed to revolutionary resilience. While we know well the merits of the well-known rallying cry *don't mourn — organize!* we wonder actually about the rhythm and texture of this wisdom as we confront the need to do both. We face this most acutely amidst the ongoing atrocities and devastations of Israel's current war on Gaza, as these tragedies compound and combine with other catastrophes worldwide. Whether among political prisoners in Egypt < https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/egypt-lgbtq-activist-sarah-hegazi-suicide-trauma> , in funerals in occupied East Jerusalem < https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2022/5/13/journalist-shireen-abu-akleh> , in vigils for those killed resisting the expansion of state violence in Atlanta < https://www.resilience.org/stories/2023-01-24/vigils-for-tortuguita-land-defenders-erupt-in-solidarity/> , the entrenchment of transphobia < https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/hrc-foundation-report-epidemic-of-violence-continues-transgender-and-gender-nonconforming-people-still-killed-at-disproportionate-rates-in-2023> , or in the everyday paralysis of considering the disastrous future of climate change—we, too, acknowledge these everyday sighs and cries of grief and invitations to collective mourning. Our turn in this forum to lesser known histories and affects of the Third World is also a feeling out how to affirm each other's political depression in a different sort of rallying cry, perhaps à la Alaa' Abd Al Fattah's insuppressible *you have **not yet** been defeated*.[3]

Alongside those working to build community accountability in the aftermath of violence, our exploration of Third Worlding is a search for frameworks of interpellating comrades into struggle. When we come to the work of building solidarity from this permission to grieve, we are acutely aware of the way liberal internationalisms today succeed in flattening the world and politics in it.

In this introduction, we lay out what third worlding might offer as a tool for reorientation in the political present. In the summer of 2020, we put out a call for papers from researchers and organizers whose work unearthed less-known rhythms of organizing, collective survival, and collaborative struggle that identified with the worldmaking ideas embedded in the Third World political project. We asked potential authors to consider what might be learned from those immaterial, affective textures that allowed disparate peoples with internationalist visions to see each other. Beyond the iconic state leaders and the foundational conferences they convened, how was the Third World lived and imagined?

The call for contributions asked authors to explore the potential in the notion of the Third World as a project for today's movement making and cultural studies scholarship from an interdisciplinary, bottom-up, and an intersectional analysis. "Third Worlding" resonates at the productive intersection between cultural studies and area studies scholarship that forums at *Lateral* have been exploring (see Cultural Constructions of Race and Racism in the MENA/SWANA < https://csalateral.org/archive/forum/cultural-constructions-race-racism-middle-east-north-africa-southwest-asia-mena-swana/>), while also drawing out resonances of historical memory for political theory and imagination, another thread < https://csalateral.org/years/> the journal is exploring. We intend the forum to be a useful tool to a wider cultural studies readership as the field continues its commitment to anti-racist, anti-ableist, and anti-colonial analysis.

Towards Third Worlding

The term “Third World” frequently denotes a place, whereas “decolonization” has become a placeholder for a political process. The “Third World” has become an imaginary archipelago of locales mired in poverty, authoritarianism, corruption. Meanwhile, everything from universities to skincare can be positively reformed through a mindful “decolonizing.” In the entry that opens the forum, Jessica Namakkal < https://csalateral.org/forum/towards-third-worlding/decolonization-and-the-third-world-namakkal/> asks, How is it that the Third World, a political project rooted in anti-colonial struggle, has become completely abstracted from a politics of decolonization?

Negative associations of Third World as place. March 28, 2023: Peaceful protesters against Macron's retirement bill are pushed back by police in riot gear; the commentary compares the scene to Afghanistan. See Namakkal, this forum.

Namakkal leads us through the emergence of a decolonial turn from the ashes of the Third World movement. Beginning with a collection of examples of references to the Third World in popular media, and rooted in her experiences teaching histories of the Global South, her piece offers a powerful frame for a conversation

about what the Third World was and what its relevance might be for today that is accessible to a wide audience.

Following from here, the others in this forum highlight the power of the internationalism of the Third World project that insisted political struggles were shared across state borders. But they also recognize the real failures of Third World anti-colonial state policies that continued to subjugate Indigenous communities, women, and racialized minorities—even as those nation states entered so-called postcolonial regimes. A *decolonizing* of the *Third World project* would center Indigenous critiques that draw out the violent elisions and silences of the liberation promised by the state heroes of the Third World.[4] Alongside feminist and anti-racist critiques, this refusal of and resistance to the Third World project is vital for any lessons its histories might proffer.

At the same time, is it possible to imagine what *Third Worlding* contemporary efforts to decolonize would entail? Without romance or nostalgia, can a critical turn to the practices and affects of the Third World project as it was lived and felt in everyday practices, offer insight to the contemporary moment? Guided by these questions, the entries that follow propose Third Worlding as a twin project of learning and unlearning. *Towards Third Worlding* is a proposal to make familiar historical precedents and make strange contemporary assumptions around the building of solidarity and progressive visions of intersectional, anti-racist, decolonial struggle. It seeks out other ways of calling comrades into political practices by exploring the ways in which Third World subjects imagined and related to each other.

Exploring the potential for Third Worlding as a proposal of political orientation for the present requires reckoning with the centrality of the state in the radical political visions of the Third World project. As mentioned above, we locate the historical shortcomings of the Third World project in the violent elisions and subjugations of third world state policies even in the name of an internationalist,

anti-colonial politics. For example, in his entry to this forum, Edward Onaci < https://csalateral.org/forum/towards-third-worlding/captive-new-afrikan-nation-solidarity-liberation-onaci/> brings us into the history of the Republic of New Afrika's (RNA) fertile experiment in building liberation through land and self-determination in the United States. The RNA here offer an interesting grounding for a Third Worldist project that is geographically situated in the heart of the so-called First World, where the conditions of liberation are equally and directly tied to a settler colonial history and ongoing present; and one that is internationalist by developing the tensions between a nationalist and non-nationalist politics. Onaci explores the ways in which New Afrikans articulated belonging in a radical new nation that acknowledged Indigenous claims to the land. Onaci identifies that this forging of new frameworks for just belonging "could not use myths about a perfect Black-Indigenous friendship to help justify their claims to the five state territory." In so doing, his entry gives us an example of Third Worlding work outside the statist discourses of the Third World project popularized by its iconic leaders. The implications of Black freedom and Native liberation in settler and slave society are bound up with rich meaning for solidarity through contradiction.

In different ways, Maia Ramnath and Dahlia El Zein's entries also explore felt textures of political belonging related to but at a remove from the discourse of iconic artists and politicians like the Indian poet Ali Sardar Jafri and Egyptian president Gamal Abd al-Nasser. For Ramnath, this takes the form of a creative license with Jafri's poetry < https://csalateral.org/forum/towards-third-worlding/reawakening-ali-sardar-jafri-asia-jaag-utha-ramnath/> as an invitation to engage the poet's legacy from the perspective of today's environmental catastrophe. Engaging Jafri as a contemporary, Ramnath attempts to write back to to Jafri in a verse grounded in a contemporary context. In her entry, the speculative work of writing for and with a decolonized and decolonizing South Asia serves as one of many points of an imagined map whose contradictory territory may supply today our decolonial imaginations in the face of ecological

crisis, of the horizon of non-state polities that revitalize the call for self-determination of Indigenous and other subjugated peoples.

For her part and counter to what has been popular understanding of Nasser's legacy, Dahlia El Zein centers the 1967 Naksa ("defeat") as a productive event < https://csalateral.org/forum/towards-third-worlding/anti-colonial-defeat-1967-naksa-consequences-el-zein/> and set of relations central to rereading the affective afterlives of defeat in Egypt as heart of the Arabic-speaking world, and reverberating beyond. In so doing, she takes the decline of pan-Arabism as a starting point of where we might pick up Third Worlding today.

Together, these entries invite a creative exploration of orientation both towards the Third World as a historical project and to the political present. Central to each is a proposal of learning—unearthing aspects of specific political organizing and movement building—as well as unlearning—invitations to revisit assumptions about both specific historical moments as well as the political present.

Learning and Unlearning

We offer this two-fold invitation to fellow teachers, organizers, and students to deepen collective imagining. How to understand and remember the Third World project as a collective horizon of freedom and liberation dreamed and enacted by ordinary people in their daily lives and in their unique historical conditions (beyond the biographies of popular national leaders and the conventions they hosted)? In trying to center the everyday, lived, affective, and contradictory can we shake the hold of claims to historical truth centered on the flawed projects of post- and anti-colonial nation-states? Without these overdetermined nodes dominating flows of people and ideas in the Third World network, how else can we understand how ordinary organizers felt, reached, and sustained each other across contexts and locales?

We consider pursuing answers to these questions as a part of the practice of unlearning imperialism about which the art historian Ariella Aïsha Azoulay has recently written at length. In explaining how *unlearning* could be not about resisting tomorrow but resisting yesterday, she writes,

Unlearning is a way of disengaging from political initiatives, concepts, or modes of thinking, including critical theory, that are devised and promoted as progressive and unprecedented. Instead, it insists that *finding precedents—or at least assuming that precedents could be found*—for resistance to racial and colonial crimes is not the novel work of academic discovery.[5]

Knowing about the leaders of the Third World and indeed of other anti-colonial, anti-racist, and anti-capitalist movements is important. For many, uncovering their connections with each other can be exciting discoveries. However, underneath the shadow of the great initiatives and leaders of the Third World lies the less documented archives of collective and popular struggles led by ordinary people who sought their own liberation.

We seek to better understand the everyday material and affective exchanges that sustained the political project marking the anti-colonial movements and workers' struggles between the end of World War II and the height of the Cold War, called "the Third World." We are concerned with the ways in which the prominent, in some cases notorious, leaders of the national anti-colonial movements have come to stand in for an entire fabric of social imagination that connected peasants, workers, students, mothers, fighters, teachers, and more in those turbulent, vital decades. In turning to and reading the past, we also mean to turn to an immaterial —hardly less significant, but less tangible—web of imagination, relationality, affect, and memory of freedom. How to excavate precisely this sticky material of the Third World? And then, how to learn from their successes and failures, orientations and imaginings, practiced and aspirated intercommunality?

To Third World one's research, movement building, writing, listening, bearing witness is not to resurrect the Third World project, its heroes, its successes, or its failures. It is rather to remember that there were bridges across impasses and to inquire after how they were imagined, and crossed. In this way, *Third Worlding* may be one mode by which to retrieve, as Azoulay writes, "other modalities of sharing the world and the many refusals inherent in people's public performances, diverse claims, and repressed aspirations."[6] It is, in sum, a practice of *world-making* or *worlding*.

If the first part of third worlding is a practice of learning, the second component of this invitation is *a project of unlearning*. We ask, what of our contemporary modes of connecting struggles need to be made strange and reexamined in order for sustained forms of collaborative struggle to emerge, grow, develop, and transform? *The point is to get better at imagining our belonging to each other's freedom dreams and liberation struggles*.

This twin invitation makes up a search for alternative logics of struggle—distant from contemporary, progressive performances of solidarity and allyship. It is (we hope) a renewing and rethinking of internationalism and solidarity via the ways in which it appears or comes into being.

In convening a conversation around the possibility of *Third Worlding* our internationalist orientations to contemporary struggles, and of acting upon connections between them, our project additionally draws from recent scholarship addressing the practices of *worldmaking*. We draw on recent political excavations of the anti-colonial nationalism of Black, Indigenous, and Third World histories of anti-imperial *worldmaking* as foundational to a possible practice of Third Worlding.[7] We also draw on the work of BIPOC activists and movement makers as they reflect on the impasses faced in the past years of mobilizing during the pandemic and the ways in which they are building new practices and forms of knowledge around autonomy, mutual aid, collective action, and

sovereignty.[8] We turn to this body of work to lay out the potential of Third Worlding as an active othering of the political present and as a practice of excavating meaningful frameworks for shared struggle.

What Third Worlding is Not

In a foundational essay, postcolonial scholar Gayatri Spivak writes of how the British imperial archive constructs a place it calls "the Third World" and populates it with objects of representation it refers to as Third World women and men.[9] Her point in doing so is not to restate the truism that history is written by the victors but to examine the ways in which "Europe consolidated itself as sovereign subject by defining its colonies as others."[10] In other words, how this archival work amounted to a practice of worlding—a narrative of Britain in itself and in the world—on its own and in relation to its others. *Third Worlding* as we intend it here is not the constructing of colonial others (the kind of worlding that empire still enacts successfully). Rather, it is a practice of orienting towards radical histories that refuses the impetus to do so as rupture, break, or lineage. Beyond continuity, legacy, or break, *Third Worlding* promises a strategy of summoning anti-colonial and anti-capitalist struggle.

The forum is a small collection of diverse claims and repressed aspirations as cultures of freedom-making that can be understood together as a practice of worlding—or, a practice of ordering the world and imagining futures for it. This radical archive of shorthands, sketches for action, invitations to join, belong, rise up, provide a reservoir of rich meanings attached to the concept of solidarity. In this we lean on political theorist Adom Getachew's work as it attends to Black nationalism in the thought of individuals like Nnamdi Azikiwe, W. E. B. Du Bois, and George Padmore. Her work encourages us to see the anticolonial self-determination of these thinkers not solely in terms of nation building but as "anticipat[ing] and reconfigur[ing]" our contemporary political and economic

crises.[11] As Getachew argues, this body of Black anticolonial thought presents a wide range of rejections and inversions of, and imaginations beyond, the borders carved by the imperial order. Like her, we hope a *Third Worlding* of research and practice might "attend to the specificity of postcolonial sovereignty . . . and recent[er] the enduring legacies of European imperialism in our present."[12] The material we turn to as worlding practices offer a compelling way of thinking of what we refer to as *non-nationalist internationalism*—or internationalist alliances not dependent on the imperial frameworks of the nation-state and the dominations of sovereign rule and (post)colonial state power imposed on freedom movements.

Third Worlding as a Verb

In her recent book *Comrade: An Essay on Political Belonging,* the political scientist Jodi Dean draws attention to the pitfalls of an identity-based project of solidarity. We are moved by her critique of political modes in the US, where discussions of proper modes of "allyship" have degenerated into "mini lifestyle manuals," helping those with privilege to "feel engaged . . . without any organized political struggle at all."[13] Building from her critique, we further explore relations of comradery called into being through a shared understanding of the work of building liberation. What does that work look like in practice today? What references do we have for it? *This is a question that attends to the practice of imagining and hailing each other into struggle as we endeavor to become more than ourselves in relation to others.* Moreover, we wonder if it is not also necessary to explore how practices of mutuality and interconnection, in addition to relationality and responsibility, are built in struggle.

In this forum w*e propose Third Worlding as a search for alternative logics of struggle.* This search, at its heart, is a rethinking of internationalism and solidarity via the ways in which it appears or comes into being. The four entries of this

forum consider the lessons that histories of transnational formations of power built from the bottom up might offer the imagining and building of shared struggle today. They are collected under the frame of rethinking and relinking (learning and unlearning) Third World histories in order to renew their conditions of possibility today. That is, we propose "Third World*ing*" our sense of internationalism today—as a *verb*—as an active consideration of past struggles, cultural frameworks, leaders, and affective modes of relation in the service of building political alliance today and imagining its contours tomorrow.

The entries of the forum use Third Worlding as a verb by thinking about it as a practice of calling, hailing, or otherwise interpellating a collective subject, shared on different geographic scales and historical moments and passages. Onaci writes about the figures beckoning members to the New Afrikan nation to join the struggle for independence. El Zein discusses the way in which the defeat of the Naksa called a range of political actors into different understandings of the future, a departure from the solidarity politics of the anti-colonial project of the Third World. This question of hailing the subject is most clear perhaps in Ramnath's engagement with Ali Jafri's poem, in his question, 'Where are you, o sons of Asia?' and her retort "Is it dawn or dusk?/ Doesn't matter, we are on the move together." Ramnath especially embodies Azoulay's practice of unlearning as a return to the past that is not a sterile exercise of visiting primary sources, but of engaging "potential companions"[14] Together, the entries in the forum explore the tones and modes of interpellation. Taking Dean's question—"how do we imagine political work? . . . and how are the relations among those fighting on the same side imagined?"[15]—we hope the forum thus offers different avenues to explore how to stand with and hail others and the political relations we use to do so.

Third Worlding Now

Cascading crises mark the contradictions of today's prevailing order. In the past decade, authoritarian populism has become the shared ideology of ordering the world from on high. Strongman politicians espouse hateful policies and revanchist programs that routinely couple with reactionary, grassroots, and networked cultural mobilizations of misogyny, anti-Blackness, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and a virulent nativism that unearths and renews the eliminationism inherent to liberalism on a world scale. At the same time, human- and colonial-capitalist-driven climate change makes clear that the devastating planetary realities of our unfolding present and impending future will require bold ways to imagine our relations of dependency on each other. In every domain of social, political, and cultural life, *the question is still internationalism or barbarism*. But stating as much is increasingly less a telling declaration of position and more an invitation to ask: what kind of internationalism?

The moral bankruptcy of a liberal worldview that rushes to open borders to displaced Ukrainians while shuttering them to Palestinians, Central Americans, Syrians, Ethiopians, and Afghanis displays the sheer nakedness of its failures. The obvious hypocrisy of its assumptions cannot hold even the most basic positions. And while duplicity dominates state responses to international crisis in Sudan, Tigray, Libya, Türkiye, we are struck by the notable international and internationalist responses to the torture and murder of individual protesters, journalists, and organizers by illegitimate and autocratic settler states. We note the speed with which the names Tortuguita and Shireen Abu Akleh became household references and we mark the poignant ways in which their funerals and vigils in commemoration trace clear international vectors.

This forum arrives at a moment of suspension, pregnant with peril as well as possibilities.

It responds to the felt need to build upon engaged, intersectional analysis and concerted action by critically assessing and strategically reanimating non-state internationalisms from below to counter a range of internationalisms from above. We name the rich and plural cultural experiences of worldmaking that historically constituted the Third World project as an ongoing hypothesis for thinking through questions of solidarity amidst the devastating tail spin of ecological, authoritarian, and imperial crises everywhere in the world today. The ambition of thinking in this moment—the *project of renewing global solidarity and making worlds otherwise*—requires us to trace an inherited genealogy of freedom struggles and freedom dreams that deserve narrative reanimation, or what Eduardo Galeano refers to as "the memory of fire."[16]

We release these pieces with a sense of urgency that has only deepened since the summer of 2020 when we issued the open call. In the years since, as popular authoritarianism and new forms of grassroots care and rebellion have emerged and accelerated, the editors and authors of this forum have looked to the past in search of frameworks, textures, rhythms to help assemble and connect liberatory tendencies within contemporary resistance movements across discrete lands and histories. The forum that follows is a collection of pieces exploring possible lessons in the ways in which communities imagined change, the future, and solidarity across borders and contexts in years past. Third World internationalism appeared in resistance to the very kinds of manifestations of colonial power we see entrenched today, e.g., ongoing war, policing, and authoritarianism; resource extraction, dispossession, displacement, and land grabbing; and the vulnerabilities to premature death amidst catastrophe.

Recognizing the unevenness with which right populism, racism, and resource extraction and allocation affected the members of the historical "Third World project" and tracing their rebellious energies is part of our own inherited task in understanding of how the unevenness and asymmetries of colonial racial capitalism (in authoritarian regimes, climate catastrophe, white supremacy) is

lived today. The Third World project provided a framework beyond, and a way to connect through, that unevenness. Third Worlding can help us identify the persistence of colonial, racial, and patriarchal forms of domination today, and how their structuring effects, evolving and taking new forms, are part of a historical genealogy of the present that includes memories, cultures, and expressions of resistance.

Third Worlding also reminds us that, just as was the case with the Third World project historically, there is no one, universally shareable analytic, ideology, political strategy that can positively build worlds in opposition to ongoing local and global colonial orderings. In this regard, we follow the wisdom of the unity possible in grounded particularities that the Zapatistas encapsulate in their expression, "one no, many yeses." Dene scholar Glen Couthard details how the histories and traditions of collective action, theory, and resistance-making in Third World Marxism and Indigenous Fourth World liberation struggles can and should be thought of in relation to one another.[17] Though they trace distinct intellectual and historical conditions, their political resonances and inspirations are meaningful. In writing about Indigenous internationalism, Nishnaabeg writer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson argues that land-based Indigenous sovereignty movements, however grounded in specific histories and territories, have always been shaped by global developments of both colonial capitalism and its many resistances. Moveover, she states, "with our complex ways of relating to the plant nations, animal nations, and the spiritual realm, our existence has always been inherently international regardless of how rooted in place we are."[18]

The "Third World" therefore is not a geographic place, but rooted in places where ongoing colonial racial capitalism draws upon and deepens the geographic and social patterns (relational, concrete, abstract) of colonial racial capitalism in its reordering of the world. In that regard, the lived places, cultures, and histories of peoples historically subjugated by colonial racial capitalism continue today to be the geographic spaces of violent extraction, appropriation, and devastation of

environments; the social locations where the greatest exploitation, immiseration, and exposure to vulnerability exists; and also the places of great resistance with which we aim to connect and advance our own struggles in thoughtful articulation. Today's struggles for land and water defense as well as, and part of, longstanding projects for decolonization, land back, and sovereignty; police, prison, and border abolition; resistance to feminicide and the "re-existence" of feminist and queer life, and anticapitalism criss-cross these histories, spaces and social locations. We read the forum that follows as an invitation to *world* our struggles and renew the frames of our internationalist imaginations. We hope it calls you and are eager to hear what it elicits in response.

Notes

1. Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2007), xv. ↩
2. Our open call joins recent work in asking, "Is the state the only way to hold political community in the Third World?" See Elleni Centime Zeleke and Arash Davari, "Introduction: Third World Historical: Rethinking Revolution from Ethiopia to Iran," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 42, no. 2 (2022): 422–429. See also Adom Getachew's *World Making after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019) and Manu Karuka's *Empire's Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2019) for recent Third World internationalist scholarship. ↩
3. Alaa' Abd Al Fattah, *You Have Not yet Been Defeated: Selected Works 2011–2021* (Seven Stories Press, 2022). ↩
4. George Manuel and Michael Posluns, *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018). ↩
5. Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (New York: Verso, 2019), 17. ↩
6. Azoulay, *Potential History*, 16. ↩
7. See Alyosha Goldstein and Simon Ventura Trujillo, eds., *For Antifascist Futures: Against the Violence of Imperial Crisis* (Brooklyn: Common Notions, 2022). ↩
8. See for example *Indigenous Action Podcast*, "Indigenous Mutual Aid: One Year of Pandemic Response and Organizing," April 28, 2021,

https://www.indigenousmutualaid.org/indigenous-action-podcast-ep-7-indigenous-mutual-aid-one-year-of-pandemic-response-organizing/ < https://www.indigenousmutualaid.org/indigenous-action-podcast-ep-7-indigenous-mutual-aid-one-year-of-pandemic-response-organizing/> ; and *Millenials are Killing Capitalism,* "400+1 On the Struggle for Orisha Land and the Case for a Black Vanguard," March 7, 2021, https://millennialsarekillingcapitalism.libsyn.com/website/size/5/?search=400%2B1 < https://millennialsarekillingcapitalism.libsyn.com/website/size/5/?search=400%2B1> . ↩

9. She writes that this amounts to "the construction of a fiction whose task was to produce a whole collection of 'effects of the real,' and that the 'misreading' of this 'fiction' produced the proper name 'India.'" Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives," *History and Theory* 24, no. 3 (1985): 249. ↩

10. Spivak, "Rani of Sirmur," 247. ↩

11. Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self Determination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), 3. ↩

12. Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*, 9. ↩

13. Jodi Dean, *Comrade: An Essay on Political Belonging* (New York: Verso, 2019), 17. ↩

14. Azoulay, *Potential History,* 16. ↩

15. Jodi Dean, *Comrade: An Essay on Political Belonging* (New York: Verso, 2019), 8. ↩

16. Eduardo Galeano, *The Memory of Fire Trilogy (Genesis, Faces and Masks, and Century of the Wind)*, trans. Cedric Belfrage (New York: Open Road Media, 1988). The epigraph reads: "I believe in memory not as a place of arrival, but as a point of departure—a catapult throwing you into present times, allowing you to imagine the future instead of accepting it. It would be absolutely impossible for me to have any connection with history if history were just a collection of dead people, dead names, dead facts. That's why I wrote *Memory of Fire* in the present tense, trying to keep alive everything that happened and allow it to happen again, as soon as the reader reads it." ↩

17. Glen Couthard, "Once Were Maoists: Third World Currents in Fourth World Anti-Colonialism, Vancouver, 1967–1975," *Routledge Handbook of Critical Indigenous Studies* (London: Routledge, 2020). See also Glen Sean Coulthard's introduction to *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality*, by George Manuel and Michael Posluns (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2018). ↩

18. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 56. ↩

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Rayya El Zein is Director of Partnerships at Code for Science & Society, a US based tech non profit. Her professional research and writing in this capacity focuses on the politics of open source and open science, the legacies of cyberlibertarianism, and the politics of decentralization. She holds a PhD in Theatre and Performance from the City University of New York. Her research for over a decade concerned the politics of listening and interpellation in Arabic hip hop and rap and neighboring musical and political subcultures. She held research and teaching positions at the University of Pennsylvania and Wesleyan University. Across her work, Rayya is interested in how subcultural participants relate to change and define political processes. She lives in Philadelphia and tweets occasionally from @rayelz.

View all of Rayya El Zein's articles.

Malav Kanuga

Malav Kanuga is a postdoctoral researcher at the Media, Inequality and Change Center at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania and Rutgers University. He is a cultural anthropologist trained in ethnographic and archival studies of space, culture, and power, as well as uneven development in an internationalist and historical framework. His work as an activist-researcher pays attention to struggles around the form and meaning of city life. His current research focuses on and accompanies organizing around political communications and media infrastructures within social movements. He is interested in how and what communities communicate as they mobilize, and how movements leverage established as well as grassroots media to change narratives shaping the policies governing consent and constraint. Additionally, Kanuga’s research broadly addresses value and difference in urban lifeworlds; the cultures and histories of popular mobilization and imagination; and the politics and legacies of liberation; the articulations and resistances to domination and hierarchy in the urban and social lifeworlds of racial capitalism; and uneven urban histories

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